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understand so frequently makes diagnosis difficult, might have added significance.

B. F. KINGSBURY
DEPARTMENT OF HISTOLOGY
AND EMBRYOLOGY,
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

THE CONFERENCE AT CLEVELAND ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

READERS of Science may be interested in some account of what was probably both the most novel and significant conference of all those held by the various learned associations at their recent holiday meetings, namely, the conference devoted to the History of Science at the Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association in Cleveland. Of even more value than the papers read and the public discussion, although these were marked by an unusual degree of originality, interest, and enthusiasm, and were heard by an audience of very gratifying numbers, most of whom remained throughout the unusually long session, was the opportunity offered—in many instances for the first time—to those engaged in research in this promising field to become personally acquainted, and to talk over matters of common interest informally and face to face.

The chairman of the conference, George L. Burr, librarian, and Andrew D. White professor of history at Cornell University, and a former president of the American Historical Association, presided with something even more than his characteristic charm and felicity. In his opening remarks he noted the fact that while isolated papers bearing on the history of science had been presented at some previous meetings of the American Historical Association, this was the first time in the history of that organization that a conference had been especially devoted to that subject. He also emphasized the rapid strides that research in this subject had made in recent years. Of the papers which followed it will be possible to give only a very brief and, I fear, otherwise imperfect summary here; it is to be hoped that they may be published in full at an early date.

T. Wingate Todd, professor of anatomy in the medical school of Western Reserve University, in an illustrated address on Egyptian medicine showed the predominance of ritual and superstition in that field and the employment of similar postures and paraphernalia by the natives of modern Africa. He questioned whether the priest-physicians of the Nile Valley advanced far beyond the stage of primitive practise in dentistry, general surgery, and therapeutics; and was also skeptical as to their contributions to pharmacology. Before the Eighteenth Dynasty abscesses were incised and fatty tumors removed, but surgery of the extremities is doubtful. During the Fifth Dynasty splints were used with the idea of supporting the injured limb rather than of controlling the fragments.

The paper on "Peter of Abano: A Medieval Scientist," 1250–1316(?), by the present writer discussed the sources for and chief events of his life, showing that he perhaps lived beyond 1316 and taught at Treviso and Montpellier as well as at Paris and Padua, that the evidence for his being protected and employed by popes is better than that for his supposed trial by the inquisition, and that he was a commentator on Aristotle, a critical translator especially from the Greek, and an experimental astronomer, as well as a keen student of medicine and natural science. He was far, however, from being free from the superstition of his age.

Louis C. Karpinski, professor of mathematics in the University of Michigan, spoke concerning "The history of algebra." After touching briefly upon the contribution to mathematical speculation made by the Egyptians, he illustrated the relations of Greek geometry, especially in such a problem as that of the construction of a regular pentagon, to the development of algebraic thinking. He concluded with a summary of the contributions made by several Arabian mathematicians to the growth of algebra.

Henry Crew, professor of physics in Northwestern University, discussing "The problem of the history of science in the college curriculum," pled for a more human treatment

of the sciences and argued that the teaching of science might be made more stimulating to young minds by some treatment in each case of the personality and achievement of the man who had discovered the scientific fact or law in question. He further advocated separate courses in the history of science in the four fundamental fields of physics and chemistry, zoology and botany. He also raised the question of the age and academic position of the men to offer such courses.

The discussion was opened by Dr. Harry E. Barnes, of The New School for Social Research, who noted that of the four papers on the program only one was by a professor of history and expressed regret that of all the workers in the history of science probably even less than this twenty-five per cent. were professed historians. He emphasized the high value and promise of the history of science compared to the old political history, and sketched the progress particularly of American historiography of science. He also mentioned the increased space given to the history of science in the new Syllabus of Professor James Harvey Robinson's well-known course in the Intellectual History of Europe.

Charles H. Haskins, dean of the graduate school of Harvard University, who was chosen at this meeting second vice-president of the American Historical Association, expressed his sense of the importance of the history of science and desire that a conference in the subject might become a permanent feature of the program. In speaking of Professor Henderson's course at Harvard in the history of science, he suggested the advisability of requiring one laboratory course as a prerequisite to the course in the history of science, so that the students would not consider the history of science as a substitute for science itself.

Dr. Walter Libby, of the University of Pittsburgh, after a brief tribute to the memory of Sir William Osler as a friend of the history of science, advised that courses should be given for freshmen in the general history of science, and saw large possibilities for advanced work in this new field of university research. As for the less easy problem of the intermediate courses, he suggested the treatment of the history of physics, chemistry, and the like by experts in those subjects with the possible cooperation of the professor of the history of science. A treatment of various epochs by the department of general history with emphasis on the relation of scientific progress to the advance of civilization was also to be desired. He alluded to the course in the history of science and civilization now required of freshmen in the combined arts and medical course at the University of Toronto, and to courses offered in the histories of medicine, pharmacy, and psychology at Pittsburgh.

In view of the good attendance at this conference, although it was not arranged for until almost the last moment, and the fact that the program was a little too crowded, I am inclined to suggest that another time there should be at least two conferences planned, one for papers embodying historical research, and the other for a discussion of the teaching of the history of science.

Lynn Thorndike
Western Reserve University,
Cleveland, Ohio

THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

FINANCIAL REPORT OF THE PERMANENT SECRETARY

L. O. Howard, permanent secretary, in account with the American Association for the Advancement of Science

Dr.

To balance from last account		$7,575.45
To receipts from members:		
Annual dues previous to 1918	$435.00	
Annual dues 1918	479.00	
Annual dues 1919	31,330.00	
Admission fees	535.00	
Life membership fees	500.00	33,279.00
To other receipts:		
Sale of publications	$22.50	
Interest on accounts at bank	114.35	
Miscellaneous receipts, including treasurer's pay-		